



**DATE: 20 June 17**

**MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Hampton**

**PLEDGE/MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

**Moment of silence – Especially, for our sailors who died on the USS Fitzgerald and for the young man who returned from N. Korea and died from his injuries.**

**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:**

**I would like to say how great it is to have Barry Newstadt back in his seat. I want to make sure we're on the record of saying we're most proud and happy to have "COL" Angela Showell as a member of our commission.**

**Last Thursday, I was at the Governor's office, a ceremony recognizing our efforts in housing 500 veterans. What a wonderful thing it is to be in Delaware and to know that there's no reason for any veteran to be homeless for very long.**

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

**Correction on last month's minutes -August meeting at the American Legion is at Post 2 not Post 22. All are in favor of amendment and approval of previous minutes.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:**

**Vince Kane, Wilmington VAMC - I'm new to Wilmington and been at the job for less than 30 days.**

- 1- Joint Commission visited our facility for a comprehension survey. They were reviewing our health care system. Survey went extremely well for the medical center. The Joint Commission survey went out their way to complement the care that our staff was providing, the attitude and the approach that our staff had with patients. Feedback with veterans regarding our facility was always very positive. Having said all that, there's still a lot of opportunity for improvement. We've put together an action plan that will address their findings so that we can improve, but there was no significant findings related to safety or veteran care. We are eager to look at their recommendations & improve everything that we're trying to do.**
- 2- Academic Officiation – We have begun to work with University of Delaware – looking at ways we can partner around meeting our veterans' needs. Particularly those that have rehabilitative needs. We had a nice ceremony there to note the partnership, but most important we are not sitting with them on a routine basis. We have some meeting set up to review subjects from a care prospective, a recruiting prospective and ultimately a research prospective. Mainly researches on fall prevention and rehabilitation on our community.**

- 3- Opening of the Georgetown clinic- no longer July 7<sup>th</sup>. The clinic is not going to be ready. We are working on the punch list with the developer. Particularly, on the security issues that need to be in place and testing all the equipment. So we'll be back to you with the official start date. We want to make sure it's fully functional and we will have an opening ceremony. We will be in touch with everyone about that.
- 4- Introduction of Mark Taylor- joined us as one of the new outreach workers. One of the things we kicked back up in Wilmington is our outreach efforts. Mark will be working with a team of three other outreach specialists that will really be going out to the veteran community throughout Delaware. Mark has been to several events and will continue going to more events to reach out to the community. So you will be hearing more from Mark and the team. We're still recruiting one more position, because we want to make sure that veterans know what we're offering here.

At this moment I will pause and go around with any questions/comments. –Mr. Kane

1. What's the status of your changing of your data source to be analogous to be with the military? –Commissioner Newstadt

So the secretary did make that announcement that we were going to be adopting some of the same medical records system. We will be using that same vendor and there would be about a 6 month time period that they will be looking at their action plan and in that time they will roll out any details for us. We will be partnering up with DoD to modernize our system. I don't have anything more concrete other than the expectation is that 6 months from his announcement a work group will be meeting and developing an implementation plan. This will start sometime early fall and we're excited with this update/change.

2. What's the status of the orthopedic contract and vascular surgeon shortage? –Commissioner Newstadt

We've been moving forward with both. Probably in the next 30-60 days we should have those contracts signed and have them implemented. We will be working Rowan University in NJ for the vascular so we will have that support in place. We will sign a contract for orthopedic with the Premier Group at Saint Francis. We are also actively recruiting in that area and have met with a few candidates for orthopedic surgeons to see how we bring more of that in house. With Choice and some of the changes that the secretary has talked about he would like us to be working more with Philadelphia. Sending some of the complex care cases up there and defining more clearly what we will be able to be doing here. Premier will have several days a week in our hospital.

3. How is this coverage care link up with the veterans' home? Commissioner Sarg

I don't know where this at the moment. I can get an update on that.

4. Is there a way we can get a two paragraphs or two minute elevator speech on the significant of the UD STAR campus agreement and what it includes, because I get a lot of questions at the different post? –Commission Baldwin

Yes, I can get a quick fact sheet. Again, it's surely in its infancy stages. They're just rolling it out. We think it's a very good thing. We are in discussion with them as they are getting ready to build

that ten story building. We're looking at actually co-locate some clinical services. We very much love to have our veterans have access to that kind of high quality care.

5. Is there any type of consideration to have co-pay in house? Is there any way rather than having the treasury department take money from their checks or do some kind of program at the VA where they work along with the veteran? - Commissioner Smith

We do try to review things and talk about that and set up a system prior to use getting to the point where someone's income is garnished in anyway. We also contact folks to other resources so that if someone is in financial stress or at risk in losing their housing – we can act in support to help them financially. I think where it gets complicated is that some of the billing and co-pay is handled outside our immediate team in Wilmington. So we need to make sure we are coordinating with them. We can follow up with the individual cases you're asking about.

6. What is the status on the parking garages? Is that still out for bid? –Commissioner Magner

Yes, no changes. Nothing has really happened. We haven't been able to find someone that can meet the standards that was defined in that statement of work. We're going to try to sit back down by the end of the fiscal year at relook that. I know that's been out there for a while so we have to relook at or come up with a different way to address that.

Mark Taylor – VA Outreach Program.

Our main goal is to insure that our veterans are utilizing their health care services and benefits. We'll have an individual that's there with them, walking them through the steps and help them understand how it works. Ensured that they are enrolled and any issues that may come up in their enrollment process. I'm a Delaware guy myself and I'm familiar with DE. In the last 16 years I've worked hand and hand with agencies in helping the veteran community. For me, this is a wonderful opportunity to continue to give back. I spent 8 years with DE Nat'l Guard, 5 years in the recruiting camp with the COL here. Please utilize me. I'll be here after the meeting with my business cards and information.

Bill Peterson, DVH

Last week on June 12<sup>th</sup>, we did celebrate our 10 year anniversary. It was extremely well attended. We had well over 25 distinguished representatives from Dover to include the Governor and the Lt. Governor. I apologize for the time due to the Governor's schedule conflict.

Tuesday we continued that celebration again in the afternoon with picnic and live entertainment. Chairman Farley, Commissioner Sarg and Lardizzzone came and joined us. Wednesday, they had a picnic with the Lions Club, who came out. Thursday, they went on a fishing trip. So by Friday we didn't see anyone, because they were all in the rooms resting.

We just took in a female veteran today. So we will be at 104 veterans at home. We have 10 coming up on the list for review. So we are moving in the direction in filling the building. As the result of the 10 year celebration and I guess the positive press we got; the home had over 39 phone call applications. That's the most we had in any single given week.

The only dent we had was that one of our residents went to the cabinet secretary and wanted to know why he was only allowed one beer during happy hour. So the secretary asked me to address

it and I have. I got the medical team reviewing all their charts to make sure there's not an issue regarding the extra beer. We just have to be very careful. Other than that the home is moving in a very good and right direction.

**1. What's being done about the Tela-Health Room? –Commissioner Lardizzone**

I haven't had the chance to talk to the new director, but the room is done. It is being utilized and we're using it now. Instead of doing the pre-admission screening in the doctor's office, we're actually using the Tela-Health room for that. We're using it for podiatry and room care assessments. So it is being utilized.

**2. The dental program, how's that coming along? –Commissioner Smith**

I think it's actually moving along better than I actual thought. I don't know where Friends is in their fundraising. I know that Representative Jaques has really taken this bull by the horn. He's pushing very hard to try to get the legislature to put out \$750, 000 in bond bill money this year. It's going to be tight, but we'll find out if it's going to happen. As the Cabinet Secretary said during his opening remarks on Monday, is that one thing he knows for sure is that Representative Jaques is kind of like a pit bull. When he gets his teeth sunk into a project he's not going to back off. There's a lot of support of a lot of the other legislators.

Other issue is that one of our representatives is not real happy that we have over 120 on our wait list. So as a result of that the legislator went and had a talk with the owners or the soon to be owners of the old Milford Memorial Hospital. I got a call yesterday asking me about how they can get involved in taking some of that wait list away from us. That's really not quite possible. It doesn't work like everybody thinks. So I'm not sure what's going to happen, but taking 25-30 beds in terms of the wait list, is not going to hurt us. There are veterans that are currently staying at private nursing home until their funds dry up, because most private nursing homes do not want to go through the process of contracting with the VA; mostly because the fact that they can't make the requirements. The requirements are different and you have to endure two surveys.

**3. What's goes on between your facility and hospice? –Commissioner Newstadt**

Hospice is basically a contract with us. We can do hospice care ourselves, but typically a family will contact with hospice with family is in the hospital. Usually is something a social worker/doctors work out and they come to us under hospice with DE Hospice, Compassionate or VITAS, one of the three of those. We pretty much stay hands off after hospice takes them over there and they're basically paying us for room and board. Hospice does everything else.

Is there a time factor?

There should be. Sometimes hospice has over stepped their bounds where they take a resident/patient too soon. They use up all those days that are given to hospice care and there's nothing there. Resident is still living even beyond that. We've seen that twice in the home. So we really crack down on who really comes in and ask our doctors to take a look at it and consult with the hospice. Hospice that we deal with are very good, there's a couple that we have issues with, so we don't allow them into the home. So there our two companies that we do not have an agreement with. When we had an agreement with them, they over actively marketed in the home and come in and tried to convince half of my population that they're dying and they're not.

Chairman Farley- Let me say and I've said this before, but in my own experience in Delaware nursing homes, I have to say that it's like night and day. Our veterans home is bright and cheerful and clearly the people in there are being taken care of. I think a lot needs to be said in in commendation to Mr. Peterson and his staff for the work they do. "Round of applause!"

Jessica Finan, Home of the Brave

We are doing rather well these days. We are at full capacity at the male facility at 15. We currently 5 in the female facility leaving 3 beds open, but we have a female veteran and two kids planning to come in today. So we will soon be full at the female facility as well.

Good news on some grants. We have been selected to keep our grant per diem through the VA. We also have been selected for two contracted beds for our female facility. We are schedule a permanent phase of doing a handicapped ramp for the females' facility. We rec'd a \$50,000 grant from the Long Neck Foundation for our female facility to help pay down our mortgage.

Thank you everyone for coming out for our Open House on our female facility. Just keep in mind that on September 23<sup>rd</sup> is our Annual Corn Hole that we'll be hosting. I will be bring flyers and email the electronic flyers via emails.

Dave Rich, DOL

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Kim Petters, Women Veteran Collective

Mark Newman- Ms. Petters is a member of my post with the VFW-Camden. She spoke at our convention regarding post Senate Bill 24. What is basically allowing veterans with PTSD, TBI and other illness like this, in order to allow medical use of cannabis. She's a veteran of the USAF suffering through PTSD who is authorized cannabis use. The issue in Delaware is that there's only one physician that can I wish you all can consider looking into Senate Bill 24. She really wanted to be here today. I can get you in contact with her and let her explain to you the benefits of this to veterans - Senate Bill 24 or Bravery Bill.

*(More information or news release is attached)*

Brendan Mackie, U.S. Senator Coons Office

There are two pieces of legislation working with the Federal Side

1. Yellow Ribbon Education Program
2. Alternative Medicine Vets Bill –Alternative medicine offered to veterans

Make sure that everyone's voices are heard, so if you talk to any veterans, please encourage them to call our office. If anyone has any ideas or any piece of legislation you see out there, please continue to contact us and let us.

1. Please explain the Yellow Ribbon Education Program

**Yellow Ribbon extends the GI Bill. Some of those top teared schools you can probably just pay \$10 to go (Example: Harvard Law School). It's not well known.**

**Carol Johnson, New Century Hospice**

**First of all I would like to say that I'm also a veteran, thank you. I actually also use to work here as an intern and went to work rehab. It's been 10 years- 10 years ago I was a veteran with small children and homeless. Home of the Brave at that time did not take women. So I'm very excited there's a new facility that takes women and children.**

**I'm now a social worker with New Century Hospice. I've brought information. This gives everyone in Delaware another option. We focus on the quality of life. New Century Hospice is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in the nation. It's now in 30 states and Delaware is the 30<sup>th</sup>. We just opened up our office in Smyrna. We are currently covering Kent and Sussex County. The next office will be opening Newark in New Castle County. A lot of times when people are near the end, which is 6 months, before hospice comes in. We also have a set verification we have to do. First are 90 days and 60 days after. According to the criteria, I heard Mr. Peterson say that sometimes they get better and hospice is still involved. Well, we would discharge them, because we are not spending the state's money or we're not holding that bed if they're getting better. We have a card that shows the different stages and criteria. We also have a volunteer program.**

**Do you visit the Veterans Home also? – Commissioner Smith**

**Carol- Only if we have a contract with the nursing home, as what Mr. Peterson stated.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**BEAR CEMETERY (Armbruster)**

- **Interments – 76**
- **Memorial Day Service**
- **One person retired, but they haven't approved the hiring. I think it's sometime in September doing interviews for that job.**

**Vice Chair Showell-Did anyone get feedback on the Bear Cemetery attendance? Because I've been to a quite a few now and I thought it was low. Did we get any feedback on why it was low? I don't know if it's something we need to be doing differently as a Commission.**

**Chairman Farley- I think is might be the matter of advertisement, because people may not be used to us switching to having separate ceremonies – one separate from the bridge on different days. Could be holiday weekend itself. Also, there were other events on the same day. They had 2 events in Dover that day.**

**MILLSBORO CEMETERY (Bradley)**

- **Interments – 28**
- **Flag Day Ceremony (POW/MIA Chair ceremony)**

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (Sarg)**



- Veterans Home – additional upgrade – future meeting in July with Lt. Governor talking about the budget and what we're looking at for the next 3-4 years. We want to work with them with the new State budget.

#### **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS (McMullen)**

- HB 112 – relating to permits issued to service members and their spouses by board and commission – that passed and currently awaiting the Governor's signature
- HB 26 – established license plates for veterans of the Operations of Desert Storm- has passed and signed by the Governor. It's now available through DMV.
- HB230-State High School diplomas for veterans who served during identified period of war or conflict, is now in committee.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

##### **Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)**

- Memorial Day Ceremony– I wasn't there to attend, but I heard it went well at the Northern Cemetery. Especially, when a guest speaker changed about three times.
- General membership was held on 12 July. Reported another successful airman's dinner held at the Airman's Café DAFB for 30 dorm residents and cosponsored by the Base Chapel
- Chapter has secured an ice cream both for a fund raiser during upcoming Open House & Air Show August 26 & 27.
- Plans for AFSA sponsored POW/MIA Day 15 September & a Combat Dinning Out with all base councils & groups' to be held 6 October, were discussed and committees formed.
- Delegates were elected to represent the chapter at the upcoming AFSA International Professional Airman's Conference, 22- 25 July in Reno, NV. The SECAF, Chief of Staff, current CMSFAF & 10 past CMSAF will be present. Also Command CMSgt and First Sgt. Conferences will be on site. A1C Karie Thomas will represent the chapter, Division and DAFB in the International Airman of the Year competition.
- The chapter will also have an information recruiting table at the 21 October DAFB Retiree Day

##### **American Legion (AL)**

- Attend both Memorial Day ceremony at the ceremony and bridge.
- Attended meeting at DCVA with State/Local Colleges
  - Del Tech, University of DE, DEL State still hasn't had a person to fill the vacant position; Wilmington University wasn't able to attend.
  - Some colleges are opening serval lounges for the student veterans. This is a place for them to go and bounce ideas back and forth regarding their issues. This is separate from the rest of the student population.
- University of DE VA signing
- Deployment ceremony in Smyrna
- Veterans Home
- State Convention is July 12-13 at Dover Downs
- National Convention August 17-24

I submitted my name for reappointment for this commission position. 3 names were submitted from the American Legion.

##### **American Veterans (AMVETS)**

- Thank for all the participates during the Southern Cemetery's Flag Day ceremony
- Rec'd a check from the Ladies Auxiliary for the Veterans Trust Fund for \$1,000. 00.
- Chapter provided music for the Veterans Home event
- Ladies Aux would like to provide entertainment for the Home of the Brave event
- Thank you to Kirby who helped one of our veterans with a housing issue through the Trust Fund

#### **Delaware Veterans (DELVETS)**

- Attend POW/MIA Chair at the Northern Cemetery & had the privilege to do the invitation/benediction
- DELVETS Post 1 – Memorial Service
- Grave yard detail – memorial flags at veterans graves at various cemeteries to include the veteran cemeteries
- Delaware Chapter 242<sup>nd</sup> Army Birthday celebration at the DE Military Museum.
- August the 2<sup>nd</sup> will be my last day.

*Farewell letter was read to Commission Board*

#### **Disabled American Veterans (DAV)**

- 19-20 we had our DAV State Convention
- Harvest Ridge Winery donated \$16, 000 to purchase a DAV vehicle
- Attended Memorial Service at the cemetery
- Attended promotion ceremony for Angela Showell
- 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Picnic at the Veterans Home
- Flag Day at Southern Cemetery
- Heading to Kentucky for DAV seminar
- DAV National Convention will be in New Orleans

#### **Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA)**

Unfilled position

#### **Marine Corps League (MCL)**

- No report

#### **Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)**

- Homeless Meeting
- DCVA Run
- AFA Meeting/AMC Museum – MG Timmons
- DVH Admission meeting
- State Council for Persons with Disability Mtg. – Employment Oversight Commission
- Friends of the DE Veterans Home Mtg.
- First State Community Partnership Mtg.

#### **Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)**

- May 21<sup>st</sup> – Newark Memorial Day Parade – POW/MIA chair will be on display in the Town Hall
- Attended both Memorial Day Services
- State Convention already held
- State Family BBQ coming up on August 5<sup>th</sup> at Mission BBQ in Dover
- National Convention will be in Dallas, TX in August



### **Military Order of World Wars (MOWW)**

- **May 16<sup>th</sup>** – attended “Our Community Salutes” –this celebration honors high school seniors who have enlisted in the Armed Forces. Dir. Kirby was one of the keynote speakers.
- **May 20<sup>th</sup>** –POW/MIA Chair dedication at Northern Cemetery
- **Attended both Memorial Day ceremonies – Northern Cemetery & Bridge**
- **June 6<sup>th</sup>** –National MOWW Saints– Change of Command Ceremony
- **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Veterans Home**
- **242<sup>nd</sup> Army Birthday at the DE Military Museum**
- **Next Saturday – Region MOWW Convention at DE Military Museum**
- **National MOWW Convention in Montana in August**
- **Volunteer 1-2 times a week at the DE Military Museum – Please come to visit and even volunteer**

### **Veterans of Foreign War (VFW)**

- **State Convention was held beginning of the month**
  - **VFW supports Bill 24 with Ms. Petters – Had American Legion attend convention with support of Bill 24**
  - **National Rep spoke on individual unemployment cuts – VFW is in total opposition. Please get a hold of your representatives and tell them this is not smart to take money away from a disabled veteran- unemployable veteran**
- **National Convention is in New Orleans on July 22-26.**

### **Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)**

- **Manned the Wall at DC for Rolling Thunder during Memorial Day weekend**
- **Preparing our campaign for DE Veterans Trust Fund – launch timeframe is in September**
- **Donations of 24 pillows from Bed, Bath & Beyond went to HOB**
- **Both schools, DE & First State Military Academy, both are full for next year.**
- **My book comes out in August – it’s called, “Carrier to Classroom.”**

### **At Large**

#### **Newstadt**

- **Check from JWV for Stand Down for \$100**
- **May 21- Annual meeting**
- **Next Sunday -Monthly meeting – guest speaker is the new county executive, Matt Myers. Will be asking him on his priorities with veterans.**
- **Possible merging with VVA – asked to talk to Paul Davis for details**

### **Showell**

- **Legislation – trying to support**
  - **Senator Delcollo has a resolution to increase veterans access to higher education**
  - **Announcement on Thursday for the initiative at Legislative Hall**
- **Bill from Senator Mansion from West Virginia**
  - **Published Senate Bill 766 to modernized the Technician Act**
  - **Technician Act with the Guard is very old**
  - **Take title 2 technician to Title 35**

- Will limited the Adjutant General's ability to mobilize Guardsmen in State emergencies.
- 19 Members leaving for deployment
- Top 2 issues for Guardsmen/Reservist – Trying to maintain while deployed
  - Financial
  - Relationship
- Trust Fund helps with various situations
- 23-29 Jul - Camp Colwell – Bethany Beach
  - Kids of DE guardsmen will be the camp
- 9-12 Sep – Nat'l Guard of the United States meeting
  - Louisville, KY
- 287<sup>th</sup> Army Band
  - Summer Concerts throughout Delaware

#### **Hampton**

- Absent

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

*Chairman Farley - Director Kirby is absent today, because he was invited to speak at his former high school.*

**DVTF Previous Month: Applications 9; Granted 5 (55.5%); Awarded \$5319.89;  
Balance - \$44,973.62**

#### **TERM EXPIRATIONS:**

**Smith – 2 August**

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**August Meeting at American Veterans' Post 2 (CLOSED)**

**- Confirm for Tuesday, 18 July**

**World War I Memorial (OPEN)**

**- Projected Friday, 10 November dedication**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Paul Lardizzone – Starting next year, we will be working with Representative Earl Jaques, on a Memorial for Women Veterans.**

#### **ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

**Chairman Farley encourages all the commissioners' organization to be a sponsor for the annual Freedom 5K coming up on July 1<sup>st</sup>.**

#### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**12:30 / Danio Diary – Andrew Braune, Vice President of Sales**